made of the resumption of Foreign Secretary level dialogue with Pakistan, signing of Treaty for sharing of Ganga waters with Bangladesh, and progress on several bilateral issues with the neighbouring countries. People to people level contracts are being promoted. The result has been a definite improvement in the overall atmosphere of mutual trust and urge for progress among all.

Likewise, Government have been actively pursuing a "Look East" policy as part of development of all round relations with the ASEAN countries. In the bilateral framework, as full dialogue partner of the ASEAN, as participant in the ASEAN, Regional Forum (ARF), and through institutional linkages, the Government has sought to further improve and consolidate relations with member countries of ASEAN.

With the Central Asian Republic, the Government has paid due attention to forging close relations with them. Resident Missions were established in each of them and bilateral visits at the highest political level have been exchanged with all. Trade and economic bonds are expanding, so are people to people contacts.

With countries of the West Asian region, the Government have maintained regular dialogue at all levels, including through exchange of delegations and seeking to promote cooperation in all fields. including trade, commerce, science and technology, industrial cooperation, environment and culture.

With China, relations are acquiring maturity and substance. Exchange of visits at the highest political level continues and both sides are agreed to work towards a constructive and cooperative relationship. With Japan, relations continue to strengthen and grow. Economic interaction has been expanding rapidly since economic liberalisation in India from 1991. Japan is India's largest bilateral donor for the last 6 years. Both countries have constituted Parliamentary Friendship Associations which is another step in the direction of forging closer relations. Relations with the two Koreas are traditional and friendly.

Land for CGHS Dispensary

77. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO :
SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3509 dated August 13, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the plot for CGHS dispensary earmarked in CGHS Complex, Vasant Vihar by Land and Development Office has not yet been taken over by CGHS till date;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in taking over the same;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be taken over by CGHS; and

(d) the time by which the dispensary building is likely to be constructed and start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (c) The plot has not been handed over to the CGHS by the Land and Development Office, as yet.

(d) The construction of a CGHS Dispensary at Vasant Vihar depends on the availability of resources and fulfilment of CGHS norms.

[Translation]

Bonded Labourers

78. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA:
SHRI A.G.S. RAMBABU :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that bonded labourers are on the increase in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government issued any directive to the State governments/non-Governmental Organisations to identity the same;

(c) whether any complaints regarding violation of Contract Labour Abolition and Regulation Act have been received;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(e) the number of persons identified as working under bondages in all the States/Union Territories; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to prevent the workers from bondage and the action taken against the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a), (b) and (e) to (f) The Bonded Labour System stands abolished under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Ordinance w.e.f. 25.10.1975. The Ordinance was replaced by the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. The State Governments have been advised from time to time to enforce provisions of the Act vigorously. Upto March, 1993, the number of bonded labourers identified was 2,51,424. No further cases of bonded labourers have been reported by any State Government/Union Territory since then. However, in October,